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TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 STATE 159330

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EAGR KFLU EAID TBIO PREL XX

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR NEW DELHI CONFERENCE ON AVIAN AND
PANDEMIC INFLUENZA IN COLLABORATION WITH IPAPI

¶11. This is an action request (see para 12) both for posts whose host governments have not yet accepted invitations to the New Delhi avian and pandemic influenza conference and for donor nations.

SUMMARY

¶12. Begin Summary: The USG has assumed a world leadership role in the effort to combat the spread of avian and pandemic influenza (API), beginning with the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza (IPAPI) first announced by President Bush at the UN General Assembly in September 2005. Avian influenza continues to spread in poultry, and the threat of a mutation that would cause a potentially catastrophic human pandemic persists. The USG strongly supports the Government of India (GOI) which, in collaboration with IPAPI, is organizing the next major international conference, to be held in New Delhi December 4-6. This message asks posts to engage host governments to urge attendance at the New Delhi conference. This message also requests posts whose host nations are potential donors to urge them to fulfill past commitments and/or to make additional pledges for combating avian and pandemic influenza. We request a response before November ¶129. End summary.

BACKGROUND: GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT ON API

¶13. Since its first appearance in 1996 in China, the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus has spread to some 60 nations and has become entrenched in several countries, including Indonesia and Egypt. Over 300 million poultry have died or been culled since 2003. The World Health Organization as of November had laboratory confirmation of 335 human cases of avian influenza, 206 of which were fatal, a mortality rate of 61 percent. Sustained and efficient human-to-human transmission of avian influenza has yet to take place. If it does occur, according to one estimate, the worst-case scenario for a global human pandemic could result in over 140 million deaths worldwide and staggering economic losses. Consequently, governments, and international organizations continue to respond to outbreaks of H5N1 in poultry and other animals, to limit the spread of the virus, and to prepare for a possible pandemic.

¶14. Containing the spread of avian influenza and preparing for a potential global human pandemic have remained key USG foreign policy objectives since President Bush announced the formation of IPAPI at the UN General Assembly in

September 2005. The International Partnership works closely with bilateral partners and with the United Nations System Influenza Coordinator (UNSIC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the World Organization for Animal Health (known by its initials in French as OIE), and with regional organizations, such as the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. The Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs, Paula Dobriansky, established the Avian Influenza Action Group (G/AIAG) to coordinate international action among all USG agencies involved. The USG strategy is to increase global action to address the global threat in three ways: (1) preparedness and communication; (2) surveillance and detection; and (3) response and containment.

¶5. The New Delhi Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, hosted by the GOI and organized in collaboration with IPAPI, will take place from December 4-

¶6. The conference, which will focus on the importance of addressing both human and animal health concerns, will decide on a road map for future action. New Delhi will be the fifth major high-level international conference on API, following meetings in Washington (October 2005), Beijing (January 2006), Vienna (June 2006) and Bamako (December 2006). Special Representative on Avian and Pandemic Influenza John Lange will lead the U.S. delegation, which will include senior officials from State, USAID, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services.

¶6. The GOI has invited agriculture and health ministers in nations where it has diplomatic posts and has invited other nations through its UN mission. The U.S. Government (through USAID) will contribute up to 300,000 dollars to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization to fund the travel

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of delegations to the conference from developing nations, and the European Commission is also contributing funds for this purpose. (Host nations interested in this funding should contact FAO or the European Commission).

¶7. The U.S. has been the leader in providing grant funding for API. The U.S. contribution of 100 million dollars was the largest pledge by a single nation at the 2006 Bamako conference and brought total USG funding to \$434 million, out of a total of \$2.35 billion pledged since the threat of avian influenza appeared. We plan to announce another substantial pledge of new funds in New Delhi. We urge other donor governments to consider additional contributions.

USG GOALS FOR NEW DELHI CONFERENCE

¶8. USG goals for the New Delhi API meeting follow:

-- Ensure continued worldwide action on the avian/pandemic influenza threat and the need to build long-term capacity to deal with threats to both animal and human health from this and other infectious diseases;

-- Continue to improve communication and transparency in reporting outbreaks and in sharing samples for tracking changes in the virus;

-- Strengthen cooperation among governments through IPAPI and through key international organizations (including WHO, FAO, OIE and regional organizations);

-- Demonstrate that the U.S. Government is meeting its commitment and increasing its financial support to assist nations in confronting the avian and pandemic influenza threat and urge that other donors do the same.

NATIONS THAT WILL ATTEND THE NEW DELHI CONFERENCE

¶9. The following nations have already indicated they will attend the conference: Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Botswana, Bulgaria, Brunei, Burma, Canada, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, Fiji, France, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mauritania, Maldives, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The European Union and European Commission will also be represented.

IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATION BY WHA COUNTRIES

¶10. The possibility that outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza may occur in the Western Hemisphere is real. A recent Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) report suggests that Central America, whose population is largely rural and poor could be strongly affected. Mexico and Brazil have been leaders in various hemispheric and global activities related to avian and pandemic influenza, and we strongly believe that they, as well as the Central American nations, and Peru, which will host an ASEAN health meeting next year, should attend the Delhi conference.

CONTINUED NEED FOR API FUNDING

¶11. Additional funding is crucial to build capacity to suppress outbreaks of highly infectious influenza and to thwart its spread. While the New Delhi ministerial meeting is not a pledging conference, it does include a session for announcement of pledges. The USG, which pledged an additional \$100 million in funding at the December 2006 Bamako conference, will announce additional funding of over \$190 million in New Delhi.

ACTION REQUEST AND POINTS OF CONTACT

¶12. Posts should engage governments at the appropriate level to express USG support for the New Delhi Conference, to encourage host nations to attend and to urge donor nations to fulfill any previous pledges and to make additional pledges. Responses should be sent by cable before November 30 to the Avian Influenza Action Group (G-AIAG, attention Boggess and Summers). Host governments

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that have not received invitations should be advised to contact the Government of India or G/AIAG. Questions should be directed to Susie Boggess (BoggessSM@state.gov) or Hollis Summers (SummersHS@state.gov).

NON-PAPER (OPTIONAL)

¶13. Posts may wish to make use of the non-paper below.

(Points on Attendance)

-- The spread of avian influenza and the possibility of a human pandemic continue to pose a serious threat worldwide.

-- Highly infectious avian influenza has now broken out in 60 nations, and since 2003 more than 300 million poultry have died or been culled. Of the 334 laboratory-confirmed

human cases of avian influenza, 205 have died, a mortality rate of 61 per cent. Although no sustained human-to-human transmission has yet occurred, the potential for a catastrophic global human pandemic continues.

-- The spread of avian influenza to additional countries and its entrenchment in several nations requires continued international funding and effort to prevent its spread and to build capacity in developing nations to deal with a possible pandemic or other outbreak of infectious disease.

-- The GOI in collaboration with the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza is organizing a major international, ministerial-level conference on avian and pandemic influenza in New Delhi, India, December 4-6. Attendees will include representatives from agriculture, health and foreign ministries and the Directors General from the WHO, the FAO, and the OIE (a rare joint appearance of these three UN leaders). The U.S. delegation led by John Lange, Special Representative on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, will also include senior representatives from the Department of State, Department of Agriculture, and Agency for International Development.

--We hope your government will be strongly represented at the New Delhi conference.

(Point for WHA Embassies)

--Given the possibility that the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of avian influenza may soon spread to the Western Hemisphere, it is important that Latin American nations attend the conference to understand current international community efforts to thwart avian influenza and to redouble efforts for to prepare to contain the disease.

(Points for Possible Donors)

--While the New Delhi meeting is not a pledging conference, it does include a session for announcement of pledges.

--We hope that you can pledge additional assistance, as well as meet past commitments to fight avian influenza and prepare for a possible pandemic.

-- The USG, which previously pledged a total of \$434 million for international assistance for avian and pandemic influenza, will announce additional funding of over \$190 million in New Delhi.

End non-paper points.

¶14. Additional information on the subjects covered in this cable can be found at the following websites:

-- www.pandemicflu.gov - general USG information for primarily domestic US audience

-- www.State.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/53865.htm Core Principles of the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza including international cooperation and transparency in reporting of highly pathogenic influenza cases in humans and animals.

-- www.state.gov/g/avianflu Fact sheets on US International action on avian influenza

-- www.usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/bird_fl_u.html) general background brochure on avian and pandemic influenza

-- (<http://delmincon.com/>) New Delhi Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza internet site, includes agenda

End text.

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